

Navigating barriers to gender equality in the European Union context

Citation for published version (APA):

Kalaitzi, S. (2019). *Navigating barriers to gender equality in the European Union context: The case of healthcare sector*. [Doctoral Thesis, Maastricht University]. Open Line, Digital Printing.
<https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20191217sk>

Document status and date:

Published: 01/01/2019

DOI:

[10.26481/dis.20191217sk](https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20191217sk)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Please check the document version of this publication:

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PROPOSITIONS

NAVIGATING BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION CONTEXT *The case of healthcare sector*

by Stavroula Kalaitzi

1. "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." (*Albert Einstein*)
2. "True equality means holding everyone accountable in the same way, regardless of race, gender, faith, ethnicity - or political ideology". (*Monica Crowley*)
3. "The [European] Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail". (*EU, Treaty of Lisbon, 2007, Article 2*)
4. "Any serious shift towards more sustainable societies has to include gender equality". (*Helen Clark*)
5. Achieving gender equality is a journey, not a destination and gender inequalities are deeply rooted in each Member State's specific social reality. Taking that into consideration, policy actors may work hand in hand with decision makers to shape context-specific, evidence-informed policies, strategies and practices to effect substantial change and address effectively the barriers and controversies within country's specific context (*Valorisation*)
6. Gender equality is mainly about challenging the social norms about gendered authority and the expected social roles. It is also about balancing wisely the power of self-determination, responsibilities and obligations which come with equality; and these are lessons to be learnt by both women and men. (*This dissertation*)
7. Policy and scholarship may be the great allies in supporting the achievement of gender equality objectives and truthful champions in setting the frameworks and strategies to foster this transition for the benefit of society's and its constituent parts' sustainable future. (*This dissertation*)
8. Health systems miss female talent and perspectives, especially in higher echelons and turn weaker, underperformed since the women who deliver them do not have an equal say in the management and leadership of the systems they know best. (*This dissertation*)
9. The path towards achieving gender equality may be actually about own's inner power to bend the reality and bring small, incremental change on daily living; to transition from one standpoint to the next accumulating small things that by themselves are harmless and useless, but when repeated over and over and again, then become common belief, values, skills, discipline, common wisdom and bring social change. (*This dissertation*)
10. "The one thing I know is that I know nothing" (in ancient Greek: «*ἐν οἷδα ὅτι οὐδὲν οἷδα*») (*attributed to Socrates by Plato*)

Maastricht, December 2019